

## Severity of Air Force research reductions exaggerated

by Ron Fry, AFRL headquarters

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO – Recent news media reports concerning the potential for further personnel reductions for Air Force Research Laboratory are overstated, according to AFRL officials.

Articles in a defense trade publication and at least one newspaper reported the Air Force will eliminate 5,854 research positions by 2005.

“That’s simply not true,” said Tim Dues, AFRL executive director. Dues said media coverage of a Department of Defense report to Congress on streamlining DOD’s science and technology, engineering and test and evaluation infrastructure mislabeled all Air Force personnel reduction numbers as “research” positions.

He said that of the 5,854 referred to as research positions in the report, only 1,476 are AFRL positions. The rest are other acquisition-related positions including product center, and test and evaluation jobs that are not part of AFRL.

Also, he emphasized the numbers in the DOD report were based on reductions made from 1996 through 2005. “Most of the AFRL reductions have already taken place,” the executive director said.

He said many of AFRL’s reductions were realized through re-engineering and streamlining initiatives associated with the consolidation of the four super labs and formation of AFRL in 1997. Also, many reductions were the result of AFRL planners looking ahead and designating vacant positions for reductions versus positions occupied by individuals.

Dues said AFRL will continue to seek opportunities to streamline its operations to become more efficient while at the same time making every effort to manage any reduction of positions in a way that has a minimal effect on personnel. @